



Post–Modern Trends of Historiography in Pakistan

Sumaira Mahboob

Lecturer & Ph.D Scholar

Department of History & Pakistan Studies

The Women University, Multan

sumairawum@gmail.com

Asmat Naz

Professor (Rtd.)

Department of History & Pakistan Studies

The Women University, Multan

drasmatnaz123@hotmail.com

Abstract:

The name of Pakistani historians I.H. Qureshi, K.K. Aziz and Ayesha Jallal are highly praised for their work on the history of Pakistan. They adopted different research patterns for their research and introduced the new directions for historiography. The research methodology of each is different to other. The work of I. H. Qureshi consider the authentic source of Pakistani historiography but K.K. Aziz criticized the work of former author and believes that Pakistani classic research work and text books are full of wrong information and do not provide the reasonable and rational guidance to the new generation. But Ayesha Jallal the new famous and appreciated Pakistani historian took the next step in the field of historiography and introduced the method of focusing on the factors which forced the circumstances to shift interests and make history different. They contributed well to improve the Pakistani writing style and make Pakistani historiography up to date so that it will compete the worldwide history works.

Keywords: Historiography, Post–Modern, Pakistan

Introduction

With the advent of 20th century a new era started with the name of postmodernism that changed the whole world and perspective to view the world of past times. In this era everything from art to

science changed. Historiography also adopted new patterns, methods and narratives to explain the happenings of past. In the time of pre-modernism history was not considered as a developed or an independent discipline. Before the years of 18th century all histories were just like stories narrated by Herodotus and Thucydides. Era of modernism started from late 18th century and in this era great ideas and stories of nationalism and wider search for historical identity started to emerge. After the year 1930 a new period begun in the field of historiography, that is considered as a severe and intense a reaction towards modernist theory of historiography¹.

South Asian Historiography

In South Asia historiography also changed under the influence of postmodern approach. After world war two new events occurred in the region that only changed the geography of the region but also the approaches, perspectives and narratives of scholars. In 1947, Pakistan emerged as a new Muslim state under the ideology of two nation theory. From this significant juncture of history a new era started in South Asia having novel perspectives of historical events. After inception of Pakistan, inside the state historians started to record events that led to creation of Pakistan. Many renowned historians put their effort in this special duration of time of history. Initially scholars, historians and intellectuals followed a traditional modern approach to describe those historical events but after few passing years, especially after the separation of East Pakistan, a group of historians took the charge who believed that many aspects of history have been neglected or misinterpreted through modern theory of historiography and needs new, better approach of postmodernism for description².

Post- modern Pakistani Historians

Prof Ishtiaq Hussain Qureshi is one renowned and brilliant postmodern historian and scholar of Pakistan. His masterpiece, A Short History of Pakistan is an edited book that was published by University of Karachi Press. It is comprised of four volumes. The book is completely edited by Prof. Ishtiaq Hussain Qureshi

himself and gives a detailed and comprehensive account of the history of the region, its people, ideas, believes and Pakistan as a state from the prehistory time leading towards the creation of Pakistan and then separation of East Pakistan which appeared as a new stated named Bangladesh. Whole set of four volumes are sequentially named as, *Book One: Pre-Muslim Period* by Ahma Hasan Dani; *Book Two: Muslim Rule under the Sultans* by M. Kabir; *Book Three: The Mughul Empire* by Sh. A. Rashid; and, *Book Four: Alien Rule and the Rise of Muslim Nationalism* by M. A. Rahim et al.

This book has a prominent position in history of Pakistan as it is the first serious and authentic attempt to draw an overall complete picture of the early historical events of region, Pakistan. Given that the book actually deals with the specific time of history before the creation of Pakistan, it has been explained as, point of fact, a history of the northern region of the whole South Asian region with major emphasis on the area that is Pakistan now a days. Some of the parts have been harshly criticized by different peer reviewers as being inadequately objective about mutual association of Indian Muslims, Hindus and different British political classes of subcontinent³.

Qureshi's all historical writings and especially this book is predicated on the themes of Islam, Islamic teachings, distinctive Muslim identity culminating ultimately into the creation of separate homeland for Muslims with the name of Pakistan and the clear inveterate antipathy for the Hindus. Throughout his all historical writings and texts, Qureshi has greatly highlighted the Hindu bid for engulfing separate Muslim identity, culture and civilization into its own fold. He was quite compact in underscoring that the very basis of a separate nation was laid down by the very day when the first Muslim advent to inhabit the region of subcontinent. Thus, a nation's separate and distinctive identity is embedded in the foundations of Islam. He further added that whenever Muslims of subcontinent faced the any kind of threat of Hindu assimilation different individuals or elements within Muslims emerged and took charge to safeguard that separate and

distinctive identity of Muslims. They might be some invaders from the North-West region or saints or other great personalities like Mujadid Alif Sani (Shakh Ahmed Sirhindi), Mughal ruler Aurangzeb Alamgir or Shah Waliullah. According to him, such personality had always been the significant mover of history⁴.

According to his writings, Islam is far more than merely a simple religion to follow. It in actual is a complete, comprehensive and compact social system as well as a perfect code of life which guides human beings according to all aspects of life in such a good manner that can create a complete organized, structured, well-integrated and progressive Muslim community. Differences formed by complex system of caste, kinship, and region specifically are disallowed in this fair and just system, based on the magnificent principles of Islam. Muslims according to his point of view had always been motivated and inspired by an intense and deep affiliation with Islam in their conduct, attitude, living pattern, dealing with other communities and the whole system of governance and administration⁵.

K.K. Aziz

The great scholar of all times Banhold Brecht stated that the past must be bared to settle all accounts in a fair manner so that one could proceed in forward direction for better future. Scholars believe that to know past events and examine them is the first and prime step towards complete understanding of present and good planning about future. On contrary to this scholars and historians of Pakistan seem to believe in jacketing their past with thick clouds of falsehood and distortion, which no wind of reality and truth can blow them away. But some writers and historians are not following such misinterpreted approach. They put their effort to examine the history through the prism of reality and truthfulness. One such historian is K.K. Aziz. One renowned book written by him about the history of Pakistan, that changed the perspective created by traditional writers like I.H Qureshi is named *The Murder of History: A Critique of History Textbooks used in Pakistan*, is considered as a must read for all readers who'd like to know and

analyze as to how the historical events related to creation of Pakistan was treated; how the fallacies or misunderstanding were fabricated and how the facts and realities were either modified, omitted, molded or completely destroyed in the textbooks⁶. However, scholars often highlight two, however not so significant, shortcomings in this renowned work of K.K. Aziz:

Nevertheless, book is highly recommended by many scholars due to high importance of subject, author's meticulous and good research work, the critical thinking and analysis it induces and the strong, firm base it established for future writers and historians⁷.

In another study scholars concluded that in this book, Aziz actually sets out to mend the injustice and unfair approach that has been committed by early historians of Pakistan ever since its inception as independent state, and still continues in some way. The history books textbooks of the country have been unfortunately distorted and disfigured for certain political benefits. In this book, he has critically analyzed and offered the complete set of corrections for 66 different text books being taught as the course of Social Studies, Pakistan Studies and of different history disciplines for various students from grade 1 to 14. In this research scholars stated that it is undoubtedly a courageous and bold effort that unfortunately went unnoticed and neglected in his time. But set a new path and pattern for new historians to view the historical events related to Pakistan with a new angle⁸.

Many unfortunate consequences appeared due to this tempering of history. One of them is the distorting and misconstruing child psychology, a mind which is completely ripe and ready to be productive and constructive, filling it with all non-sense stuff, feeding the following message to the young students and little children and through them, to the whole nation:

- Follow the government and its all orders blindly
- Always support from the depth of heart the military rule and rulers

- Glorify wars despite of all losses
- Consider India as an historical enemy
- Hate an Anti-colonial past
- Give the complete credit of the creation of Pakistan to Aligarh Movement by neglecting the role of other such movements and efforts
- Impose a new culture inspired by Islamic brotherhood in Pakistan
- Fabricate lies to construct the image of fantasy⁹

Scholars report that the brave and courageous author manages to write such a magnificent book that directly point out the country's political leadership of that time when power house of state was taken by the Dictator. During his authoritarian rule, the vast subject of History was replaced by narrow course of Pakistan Studies and Social Studies. He also writes that students of history were forced to learn a fabricated collection of facts rather than real historical facts. He also makes a sound declaration by providing solid evidences that the Lahore Resolution was passed on March 24th rather than on March 23rd. These and many other claims by the author depict the fact that the politicized system of Pakistan is actually responsible for the 'Murder of History'¹⁰.

Scholars also state that while history itself never exists so the books readers read or learn are actually a reflection of writer's own thinking and opinion on some particular event or happening of past and readers only learn what the author portrays before them. As a result of this, various errors, false interpretations, and misleading statements and conclusions create a great hindrance in the fabrication of Pakistan's true historical image and Aziz tried to mend all these errors and false statements with unbiased and neutral approach towards history¹¹.

Ayesha Jallal

Interpreting and presenting South Asian history in this way rejects the vast amount of work that has already been done pointing to fragmentation, falsehood, falsehood, temporary and multi-region

ownership acquired under one umbrella category of public ownership. such as 'Hindu' or 'Muslim'. To name a few, Ayesha Jalal's *Identity and Sovereignty: The Person and Society of South Asian Islam and the Demand for Pakistan*, pointed out that the way in which Muslims appear politically and socially differs greatly depending on whether they are a minority or a major part of a provincial state. A similar point was made by scholar Francis Robinson, who spoke of the various Muslim experiences in the region then known as the United States, to show that we were there, when all Muslims were a minority but not in the provinces. of Punjab and Bengal - where Muslims lived as the dominant majority - that Muslim ideology of division was born and expressed much earlier and further. Another historian who believes that Pakistani history books spread lies and false statements about history is Ayesha Jalal. As contemporary Pakistani historian Ayesha Jalal states, "Pakistani history books [are] among the best sources available to explore the connection between power and prejudice in the creative ideas of the country's past."

In line with the views and ideas of Ayesha Jalal, many other scholars find Pakistani literature as a source of propaganda, hatred, indifference, prejudice and discrimination by creating a culture of hatred towards neighboring India, praising and honoring dictatorship and war-torn wars. blaming the political leadership for their inappropriate and inappropriate attitude and completely abandoning the great sacrifices and contributions of the Bengali Muslims to the Pakistani movement. The result of this mistreatment, distortion and falsehood is really bad as historians seem to gain one-sided bias, a narrow, negative view and a top-down approach.

One of the most famous books in the history of Pakistan is "The Sole Spokesman" by Ayesha Jalal. It is a good, admirable account of historical events, despite the fact that his thesis in the middle is probably a little exaggerated. According to researchers, Jinnah was not deep in thought, but it was probably a double-edged sword that, rather than giving her glory and honor. He didn't just use it as a great negotiating chip. It has also been reported by many scholars that he too was an Iqbalian. Most likely, as reports suggest, he may

not have read or understood much about Islam or Islamic history, but he is deeply attached to it and is encouraged by the ideology of a different Muslim nation and identity.

According to Ayesha

“Jinnah's divided country, Pakistan could not mean the partition of India; it simply meant its indulgence in a union area where Pakistan and Hindustan would meet in some way to stand together equally and proudly against the rest of the hostile country. This was not a clear pan-Islam call; this was not a conflict between Muslim India and Hindustan; rather, it was a political ideology in which there was a real political choice and a defense, Jinnah's dream India, an unfulfilled but still positive vision.”

Taking into account Jinnah's need for extravagance, Congress now gives him 'Pakistan' stripped of the eastern sections of Punjab (Ambala and Jullundur), Assam (outside Sylhet region) and west of Bengal and Calcutta - 'cut and eaten by moths.' The Pakistani Jinnah that it rejected came out of hand in 1944 and again in May 1946. Such a permanent settlement would remove Jinnah from the center, pave the way for a fully united states under Congress, and give only parts of the provinces the previous experience outside of Congress.

Many South Asian and international writers have written about the personality and work of Muhammad Ali Jinnah, as well as certain circumstances that paved the way for division. But this book by Ayesha Jalal stands out above all other books. It must be clearly acknowledged that this book has its merits. Well-researched and well-written story that makes it surprisingly interesting, albeit slightly touching the deep, inner, personal side of Mr. Jinnah which was a remarkable symbol of Mr. famous writers such as Hector Bolitho and Stanley Wolpert. His style of writing in this book remains cool and meaningful to the end.

Ayesha Jalal's main view is that Quaid claimed to be a powerful and the sole spokesman for the Indian Muslim community not only

in many Muslim provinces but also in the provinces where they were the minority. However, in view of the political and social situation of the continent, it is clear that there will always be as many members of the Muslim community outside of any area or region of Islam as within it. Jalal also added that Jinnah had never wanted a separate Muslim country. In his view he was only intended to use the threat of segregation or independence as a political tool or negotiation negotiations to make a larger, stronger claim to protect the rights of a few Muslim people in a united India. He added, Jinnah had dismissed the notion that “amputated Pakistan, eaten by a moth” was actually what he was trying to do with all his might.

The Quaid considered the matter to be a serious matter, not a particular religion. He was well-aware of the fact that Muslims lived throughout India and in different parts of the country but in large numbers in northwestern and eastern India. Since Muslim society, in fact, was a separate and distinct nation, both in practice and ideology, gaining the independence of many Muslim provinces in Hindu rule, after the end of British rule, there was little choice of evil. Can anyone blame or argue a mother who saved her two kids from a terrible storm or flood, but failed to save a third child from a catastrophic flood? Jalal's hypothesis is based on this same theory. It is not fair to say that “the need for a strategy that includes the interests of all Muslims” was non-existent. "Divorce in 1947 was not part of the solution for the problem of minority Muslims on the continent," he said. He also explains that “the citizens of Pakistan and Bangladesh may simply be viewed as helpless in the face of the plight of the besieged Muslim minority in India.”

So, she concludes that even today, the Muslim minority in India is suffering a terrible operation. Thanks to the great leader Jinnah, the whole population of Pakistan is living a free life without the threat of Hindu majority. Scholars often ask, does the writer of this book mean that if the Muslims were not in a separate homeland, Hindus would not be able to keep the Muslim minority in such a pathetic situation? She clearly admits that the partition of

subcontinent was not a complete or absolute solution to the issue, but she does not state anything about any absolute resolution of issue. Her stand simply implies that Muslims should have authorized themselves to tolerate the eternal menace of Hindu majority¹².

Thus, many scholars believe that Ayesha Jalal has merely understood and explained the various events of partition according to the perspective of the Congress. However, the ultimate truth completely filters out in all details of the situations paving the way of partition. The intellectual readers become aware of all the tough difficulties created by the overwhelmingly strong, powerful and influential forces against one man whose will, bravery and courage defeated them all. If in the line of this long, hard struggle some points remained un-observed, which, as the history depicts, were not in the human control, then nothing can decrease his greatness as a leader. Jinnah's greatest gift to his nation was the absolute freedom he won through his efforts for them. The new state that was thus created was not the one perceived by him (due to the unjust and unfair division of Punjab and Bengal), whatever land was secured for Muslims as a sovereign state to live their lives with complete liberty, respect and honor¹³.

It has become a habit in many intellectual circles in recent times to engage in self-criticism. This is a symbol of a deep story where Pakistanis even despise the past with retaliation which is a clear symbol of the mind of the grave. Experts also point out that Pakistanis hate their values, their future, and yet their predicament, even their leaders and heroes, because they are not happy with their place. One school of thought even debates the notion of a united world on the basis that the Muslim community would be better off compared to the conditions that existed in India and Hinduism. There is no other way to find out what the fate of Muslims would be if they were with Hindus without understanding the reality of the current sufferings of Muslims living in India as a minority. In 2006, the then Prime Minister of India, Manmohan Singh, formed a high-level committee, under the leadership of Justice Rajinder Sachar, to report on the plight of Indian Muslims.

The side effects are enough to open the eyes of many who are as follows:

- In rural areas, 94.9% of Muslims lived below the poverty line
- Only 3.2% of Muslims were able to obtain a loan
- 2.1% only Muslim farmers had a tractor
- Only 1% of Muslim farmers have hand pumps
- 54.6 percent of Muslims live in rural areas and 60 percent in urban areas have never been to school.
- In rural areas, only 0.8% of Muslims graduated from university, while in urban areas 40% of Muslims received a modern education but only 3.1% had a degree and only 1.2% of Muslims graduated.
- The Muslim prison population was much higher than that of Hindus

This report from the Rajinder Sacher Commission accurately reflects the current situation of Muslims living in India. This should be a real eye-opener for all those intellectuals in the sad truth about the state of life and the state of Islam in India. According to the report and its supporters, Pakistan should thank Quaid-i-Azam for its sincere efforts to achieve an independent and free country so that Muslims can shape their lives according to their values, values and ideals. It also highlights the importance of Jinnah's ideas and efforts to gain freedom and divide his country so that Muslims can live their lives with dignity and respect.

Conclusion:

The modern Pakistani historians have enormous contribution in the advancement of research methods and writing history. They introduced new patrons for historiography, point out the mistakes which were found in the classical writings and caused the wrong information, also tell the solution to correct these inaccuracies. They make efforts to advance the style of historiography to make Pakistani history works authentic at international level.

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